

A politician and a Pope die at the same time and go up to Heaven together. After they've been inside, the Pope notices that the politician gets a little better treatment than he does. So, he calls St. Peter over to ask him and says, "Well, I'm not complaining, but that politician seems to be treated a little better than I am... he's got a better house and more servants. I don't understand. I was a Pope and served God all my life; this guy was just a politician. Why he gets a better deal. St. Peter responded, "You have to understand – we get Popes all the time; this is the first politician we've ever got."

This is Peter in my story. On the 6th Sunday of Easter, we hear from [St. Peter in the second reading](#). Since it is St. Paul who dominates the writings of the New Testament (outside of the Gospels,) it is good to hear from St. Peter. This section of 1st Peter focuses on hope.

[Hope, the Church teaches](#), is one of the three theological virtues (the others are faith and charity.)

Hope is: ... the theological virtue by which we desire the kingdom of heaven and eternal life as our happiness, placing our trust in Christ's promises and relying not on our own strength, but on the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit

Today's 2nd reading gives us this hope in the midst of the suffering and death of thousand due to corona, the bewilderment of those who may not attend Church, the fear of those out of work, the anger of those who feel that they have lost control over their own lives, the confusion of students trying to understand how to learn in a new environment, and the anxiety of small businesses how they are going to survive . The list is endless. In the midst of all these suffering and death due to Covid 19, St. Peter gives us the reasons for hope. He clearly encourages the persecuted Christians to keep to the moral high ground no matter how much they're mistreated. And the reason for Hope is the Holy Spirit which makes it possible for God-fearing to have hope in the midst of any kind of sufferings. In the Gospel just before his Ascension Jesus tells his followers that I will not leave you orphans and send you an Advocate the Holy Spirit.

Peter himself had seen a pandemic or two during his time. He had seen sufferings and deaths due to wars, sufferings due to corrupt leadership and persecution of early Christians. He himself was crucified upside down. He had multiple reasons to despair. Still he is asking the early church to have Hope.

This does not mean that soon we shall have a vaccine for covid 19 and things will get back to normal soon. The Hope St. Peter is talking about is grounded in the experience of encountering Jesus face-to-face? When you look into His eyes then you cannot lose hope. There you see His love tenderly dawning on you.

So, during these difficult and uncertain times let's live in such a way that all may see the hope we have as Christians. May our hope give others hope as well, as we make known Christ Jesus.